Fingerprinting and Diagnostics, Hyderabad; Industrial Toxicological Research Institute (ITRC), Lucknow and National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad.

(c) and (d) Before approving import of GM food stuffs, safety information generated on these food stuff is examined by the GEAC through a group of experts. All genetically modified food is tested for toxicity and allergenicity prior to its approval for human consumption. As of date the GEAC has not approved import of any food stuff containing genetically modified substance.

National Environmental Awards

3202. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Environmental Awards entitled Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar for the years 1998 and 1999 were conferred in June 2003 only, and the names of awardees for the years 2000, 2001 and 2002, are still to be decided; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons for this inordinate delay in finalizing the names and what steps are being taken to see that Awards for the preceding years are conferred immediately in the following years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV):

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) As a normal practice, the conferment of the awards takes place on a day connected with the environment. The process for finalization of awardees as well as conferment of Awards has since been streamlined.

Environmental pollution

3203. SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that environmental pollution is one of the greatest health and life hazards of today;

(b) if so, whether Government are also aware that problem assumes different forms of air pollution, water pollution, food pollution and noise pollution; and

(c) if so, the measures taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV) : (a) to (c) Environmental pollution and food contamination may pose health risks. The steps taken for control of environmental pollution include formulation of Comprehensive Policy for Abatement of Pollution, supply of improved auto-fuel, tightening of vehicular and industrial emission norms, mandatory environmental clearance for specified industries, management of municipal & bio-medical wastes, promotion of cleaner technologies, strengthening net-work of air & water quality monitoring stations, assessment of pollution load and source apportionment studies, preparation and implementation of action plans for major cities & critically polluted areas. An Inter-Ministerial Coordination Committee on Environment and Human Health and a Task Force on Environment and Human Health have been constituted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests to oversee the implementation of various programmes and activities. Besides, a Vision Statement on Environment and Human Health has been brought out which includes environmental health problems posed by air pollution, water pollution, radiation, noise pollution, climate change, indoor air pollution, hazardous and bio-medical wastes.

Radio collar for Royal Bengal Tigers

3204. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have approved the proposal to radio collar the Royal Bengal Tigers in sunderbans in order to trackdown their movement and behaviour and has also sanctioned Rs. 25 lakh for the purpose;

(b) if so, whether the movement and behaviour of Royal Bengal Tigers is already well researched and documented;

(c) how does Government propose to fix radio collars and conduct DNA test on tigers;

(d) whether there is any possibility of death of some tigers in the process;

(e) whether it would not amount to cruelty to animals; and

(f) if not, how does Government support its opinion?